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Biography.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF THE LATE REV. JOHN  
COWPER, A. M.

*Written by his brother, the late William Cowper, Esq. of the Inner Temple, author of "The Task," &c. faithfully transcribed from his original manuscript. By the Rev. John Newton.*

AS soon as it had pleased God, after a long and sharp season of conviction, to visit me with the consolations of his grace, it became one of my chief concerns, that my relations might be made partakers of the same mercy. In the first letter I wrote to my brother, I took occasion to declare what God had ~~done~~ for my soul, and am not conscious, that from that period down to his last illness I wilfully neglected an opportunity of engaging him, if it were possible, in conversation of a spiritual kind. When I left St. Albans, and went to visit him at Cambridge, my heart being full of the subject, I poured it out before him without reserve; and in all my subsequent dealings with him, so far as I was enabled, took care to show that I had received, not merely a set of notions, but a real impression of the truths of the gospel.

At first I found him ready enough to talk with me upon these subjects; sometimes he would dispute, but always without heat or animosity, and sometimes would endeavour to reconcile the difference of our sentiments, by supposing that, at the bottom, we were both of a mind, and meant the same thing.\* He

\* ——— I had a brother once—

Peace to the mem'ry of a man of worth,  
A man of letters, and of manners too—  
Of manners sweet as Virtue always wears,  
When gay good-nature dresses her in smiles,  
He grac'd a college in which order yet  
Was sacred; and was honour'd, lov'd, and wept  
By more than one, themselves conspicuous there.

*See Cowper's Task, page 85, 2d edit. 1786.*

He was a man of a most candid and ingenuous spirit ; his temper remarkably sweet ; and in his behaviour to me, had always manifested an uncommon affection. His outward conduct, so far as it fell under my notice, or I could learn it by the report of others, was perfectly decent and unblameable. There was nothing vicious in any part of his practice ; but being of a studious, thoughtful turn, he placed his chief delight in the acquisition of learning, and made such acquisitions in it, that he had but few rivals in that of a classical kind. He was critically skilled in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages ; was beginning to make himself master of the Syriac, and perfectly understood the French and Italian, the latter of which he could speak fluently. These attainments, however, and many others in the literary way, he lived heartily to despise, not as useless when sanctified and employed in the service of God, but when sought after for their own sake, and with a view to the praise of men. Learned however as he was, he was easy and cheerful in his conversation, and entirely free from the stiffness, which is generally contracted by men devoted to such pursuits.

Thus we spent about two years, conversing as occasion offered, (and we generally visited each other once or twice a week, as long as I continued at Huntingdon) upon the leading truths of the gospel. By this time, however, he began to be more reserved ; he would hear me patiently, but never reply ; and this I found, upon his own confession afterward, was the effect of a resolution he had taken, in order to avoid disputes, and to secure the continuance of that peace which had always subsisted between us. When our family removed to Olney, our intercourse became less frequent. We exchanged an annual visit, and whenever he came amongst us, he observed the same conduct, conforming to all our customs, attending family worship with us, and heard the preaching, received civilly whatever passed in conversation upon the subject, but adhered strictly to the rule he had prescribed to himself, never remarking upon or objecting to any thing he heard or saw. This, through the goodness of his natural temper, he was enabled to carry so far, that though some things unavoidably happened, which we feared would give him offence, he never took any ; for it was not possible to offer him the pulpit, nor when Mr. N—— was with us once at the time of family prayer, could we ask my brother to officiate, though being himself a minister, and one of our own family for the time, the office seemed natural to fall into his hands.

In September, 1769, I learned by letters from Cambridge, that he was dangerously ill. I sat out for that place the day after I received them, and found him as ill as I expected. He had taken cold on his return from a journey into Wales, and lest he should be laid up at a distance from home, had pushed forward as fast as he



he could from Bath with a fever upon him. Soon after his arrival at Cambridge, he discharged, unknown to himself, such a prodigious quantity of blood, that the physician ascribed it only to the strength of his constitution that he was still alive; and assured me, that if the discharge should be repeated, he must inevitably die upon the spot. In this state of imminent danger, he seemed to have no more concern about his spiritual interests than when in perfect health. His couch was strewed with volumes of plays, to which he had frequent recourse for amusement. I learned indeed afterwards, that even at this time, the thoughts of God and eternity would often force themselves upon his mind; but not apprehending his life to be in danger, and trusting in the morality of his past conduct, he found it no difficult matter to thrust them out again.

As it pleased God that he had no relapse, he presently began to recover strength, and in ten days time I left him so far restored, that he could ride many miles without fatigue, and had every symptom of returning health. It is probable, however, that though his recovery seemed perfect, this illness was the means which God had appointed to bring down his strength in the midst of his journey, and to hasten on the malady which proved his last.

On the 16th of February, 1770, I was again summoned to attend him, by letters which represented him as so ill, that the physician entertained but little hopes of his recovery. I found him afflicted with the asthma and dropsy, supposed to be the effect of an imposthume in his liver. He was however cheerful when I first arrived, expressed great joy at seeing me, thought himself much better than he had been, and seemed to flatter himself with hopes that he should be well again. My situation at this time was truly distressful. I learned from the physician, that, in this instance, as in the last, he was in much greater danger than he suspected. He did not seem to lay his illness at all to heart, nor could I find by his conversation that he had one serious thought. As often as a suitable occasion offered, when we were free from company and interruption, I endeavoured to give a spiritual turn to the discourse, and the day after my arrival, asked his permission to pray with him, to which he readily consented. I renewed my attempts in this way as often as I could, though without any apparent success: still he seemed as careless and unconcerned as ever; yet I could not but consider his willingness in this instance as a token for good, and observed with pleasure, that though at other times he discovered no mark of seriousness, yet when I spoke to him of the Lord's dealings with myself, he received what I said with affection, would press my hand, and look kindly at me, and seemed to love me the better for it.

On the 21st of the same month, he had a violent fit of the asthma, which seized him when he rose, about an hour before noon,

noon, and lasted all the day. His agony was dreadful. Having never seen any person afflicted in the same way, I could not help fearing that he would be suffocated; nor was the physician himself without fears of the same kind. This day the Lord was very present with me, and enabled me, as I sat by the poor sufferer's side, to wrestle for a blessing upon him.

I observed to him, that though it had pleased God to visit him with great afflictions, yet mercy was mingled with the dispensation. I said, "You have many friends, who love you, and are willing to do all they can to serve you; and so perhaps have others in the like circumstances; but it is not the lot of every sick man, how much soever he may be beloved, to have a friend that can pray for him." He replied, "That is true, and I hope God will have mercy upon me." His love for me from this time became very remarkable; there was a tenderness in it more than was merely natural; and he generally expressed it by calling for blessings upon me in the most affectionate terms, and with a look and manner not to be described.

At night, when he was quite worn out with the fatigue of labouring for breath, and could get no rest, his asthma still continuing, he turned to me, and said, with a melancholy air, "Brother, I seem to be marked out for misery; you know some people are so." That moment I felt my heart enlarged, and such a persuasion of the love of God towards him was wrought in my soul, that I replied with confidence, and as if I had authority given me to say it, But that is not your case; you are marked out for mercy.

Through the whole of this most painful dispensation he was blest with a degree of patience and resignation to the will of God, not always seen in the behaviour of established Christians under sufferings so great as his. I never heard a murmuring word escape him; on the contrary, he would often say, when his pains were most acute, "I only wish it may please God to enable me to suffer without complaining; I have no right to complain." Once he said, with a loud voice, "Let thy rod and thy staff support and comfort me; and oh, that it were with me as in times past, when the candle of the Lord shone upon my tabernacle." One evening, when I had been expressing my hope that the Lord would show him mercy, he replied; "I hope he will; I am sure I pretend to nothing." Many times he spoke of himself in terms of the greatest self abasement, which I cannot now particularly remember. I thought I could discern, in these expressions, the glimpses of approaching day, and have no doubt at present but that the Spirit of God was gradually preparing him, in a way of true humiliation, for that bright display of gospel grace which he was soon after pleased to afford him.

On Saturday the 10th of March, about three in the afternoon, he suddenly burst into tears, and said with a loud cry, "Oh, for-  
fake



fake me not!" I went to his bedside, when he grasped my hand, and presently by his eyes and countenance I found that he was in prayer. Then turning to me he said, "Oh, brother, I am full of what I could say to you." The nurse asked him if he would have any hartshorn or lavender. He replied, "None of these things will serve my purpose." I said, "But I know what would, my dear, don't I?" He answered, "You do, brother."

Having continued some time silent, he said, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth!" then, after a pause, "Aye, and he is able to do it too."

I left him for about an hour, fearing lest he should fatigue himself with talking, and because my surprise and joy were so great, that I could hardly bear them. When I returned, he threw his arms about my neck, and leaning his head against mine, he said, "Brother, if I live, you and I shall be more like one another than we have been. But, whether I live or not, all is well, and will be so; I know it will; I have felt that which I never felt before, and am sure that God has visited me with this sickness to teach me what I was too proud to learn in health. I never had satisfaction till now. The doctrines I had been used to, referred me to MYSELF for the foundation of my hopes, and there I could find nothing to rest upon. The sheet anchor of the soul was wanting. I thought you wrong, yet wished to believe as you did. I found myself unable to believe, yet always thought that I should one day be brought to do so. You suffered more than I have done before you believed these truths; but our sufferings, though different in their kind and measure, were directed to the same end. I hope he has taught me that, which he teaches none but his own. I hope so. These things were foolishness to me once, but now I have a firm foundation, and am satisfied."

In the evening, when I went to bid him good night, he looked stedfastly in my face, and, with great solemnity in his air and manner, taking me by the hand, resumed the discourse in these very words. "As empty, and yet full; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things—I see the rock upon which I once split, and I see the rock of my salvation. I have peace in myself, and if I live I hope it will be, that I may be made a messenger of peace to others. I have learned *that* in a moment, which I could not have learned by reading many books for many years. I have often studied these points, and studied them with great attention, but was blinded by prejudice, and unless he who alone is worthy to unloose the seals had opened the book to me, I had been blinded still. Now they appear so plain, that though I am convinced no comment could ever have made me understand them, I wonder I did not see them before. Yet great as my doubts and difficulties were, they have only served to pave the way, and being solved, they make it plainer. The light I have received comes late, but it

it is a comfort to me that I never made the gospel truths a subject of ridicule. Though I dissented from the persuasion and the ways of God's people, I ever thought them respectable, and therefore not proper to be made a jest of. The evil I suffer is the consequence of my descent from the corrupt original stock, and of my own personal transgressions; the good I enjoy comes to me as the overflowing of his bounty: but the crown of all his mercies is this, that he has given me a Saviour, and not only the Saviour of mankind, brother, but *my* Saviour.

"I should delight to see the people at Olney, but am not worthy to appear amongst them." He wept at speaking these words, and repeated them with emphasis. "I should rejoice in an hour's conversation with Mr. N—— and, if I live, shall have much discourse with him upon these subjects, but am so weak in body, that at present I could not bear it."

At the same time he gave me to understand, that he had been five years inquiring after the truth; that is, from the time of my first visit to him after I left St. Albans, and that, from the very day of his ordination, which was ten years ago, he had been dissatisfied with his own views of the gospel, and sensible of their defect and obscurity; that he had always had a sense of the importance of the ministerial charge, and had used to consider himself accountable for his doctrine no less than his practice; that he could appeal to the Lord for his sincerity in all that time, and had never wilfully erred, but always been desirous of coming to the knowledge of the truth. He added, that the moment when he sent forth that cry\* was the moment when light was darted into his soul; that he had thought much about these things in the course of his illness, but never till that instant was able to understand them.

It was remarkable, that, from the very instant, when he was first enlightened, he was also wonderfully strengthened in body, so that from the 10th to the 14th of March we all entertained hopes of his recovery. He was himself very sanguine in his expectations of it, but frequently said, that his desire of recovery extended no farther than his hopes of usefulness; adding, "Unless I may live to be an instrument of good to others, it were better for me to die now."

As his assurance was clear and unshaken, so he was very sensible of the goodness of the Lord to him in that respect. On the day when his eyes were opened, he turned to me, and in a low voice said, "What a mercy it is to a man in my condition to *know* his acceptance; I am completely satisfied of mine." On another occasion, speaking to the same purpose, he said, "This bed would be a bed of misery, and it is so; but it is likewise a bed of joy and a bed of discipline. Was I to die this night, I know I should  
be

\* On the 10th of March, *vide supra*.



be happy. This assurance I hope is quite consistent with the word of God. It is built upon a sense of my own utter insufficiency and the allsufficiency of Christ." At the same time, he said, "Brother, I have been building my glory upon a sandy foundation; I have laboured night and day to perfect myself in things of no profit: I have sacrificed my health to these pursuits, and am now suffering the consequence of my mispent labour. But how contemptible do the writers I once highly valued now appear to me. "Yea, doubtless, I count all things loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." I must now go to a new school. I have many things to learn. I succeeded in my former pursuits. I wanted to be highly applauded; and I was so. I was flattered up to the height of my wishes; now I must learn a new lesson."

On the evening of the 13th, he said, "What comfort have I in this bed, miserable as I seem to be. Brother, I love to look at you. I see now, who was right, and who was mistaken. But it seems wonderful, that such a dispensation should be necessary to enforce what seems so very plain. I wish myself at Olney; you have a good river there, better than all the rivers of Damascus. What a scene is passing before me! Ideas upon these subjects crowd upon me faster than I can give them utterance. How plain do many texts appear, to which, after consulting all the commentators, I should hardly affix a meaning; and now I have their true meaning without any comment at all. There is but one key to the New Testament; there is but one interpreter. I cannot describe to you, nor shall ever be able to describe, what I felt in the moment when it was given to me. May I make a good use of it! How I shudder when I think of the danger I have just escaped. I had made up my mind upon these subjects, and was determined to hazard all upon the justness of my own opinions."

Speaking of his illness, he said, he had been followed night and day from the very beginning of it with this text, *I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord*. This notice was fulfilled to him, though not in such a sense as my desires of his recovery prompted me to put upon it. His remarkable amendment soon appeared to be no more than a present supply of strength and spirits, that he might be able to speak of the better life which God had given him, which was no sooner done than he relapsed as suddenly as he had revived. About this time he formed a purpose of receiving the sacrament, induced to it principally by a desire of setting his seal to the truth, in presence of those who were strangers to the change which had taken place in his sentiments. It must have been administered to him by the master of the college, to whom he designed to have made this short declaration. "If I die, I die in the belief of the doctrines of the reformation, and of the church of England, as it was at the time of the reformation."

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But his strength declining apace, and his pains becoming more severe, he could never find a proper opportunity of doing it. His experience was rather peace than joy, if a distinction may be made between joy and that heartfelt peace which he often spoke of in the most comfortable terms; and which he expressed by a heavenly smile upon his countenance under the bitterest bodily distress. His words upon this subject once were these:—"How wonderful is it, that God should look upon man, especially that he should look upon *me*? Yet he sees me, and takes notice of all that I suffer. I see him too; he is present before me, and I hear him say, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" Mat. xi. 28. On the 14th, in the afternoon, I perceived that the strength and spirits, which had been afforded him, were suddenly withdrawn, so that by the next day his mind became weak, and his speech roving and faltering. But still, at intervals, he was enabled to speak of divine things with great force and clearness. On the evening of the 15th he said, "There is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance." That text has been sadly misunderstood by me, as well as by others. Where is that just person to be found? Alas, what must have become of me, if I had died this day se'nnight? What should I have had to plead? My own righteousness! *That* would have been of great service to me, to be sure. Well, whither next? Why, to the mountains to fall upon us, and to the hills to cover us. I am not duly thankful for the mercy I have received. Perhaps I may ascribe some part of my insensibility to my great weakness of body. I hope at least, that, if I was better in health, it would be better with me in these respects also."

The next day, perceiving that his understanding began to suffer by the extreme weakness of his body, he said; "I have been vain of my understanding and of my acquirements in this place; and now God has made me little better than an idiot, as much as to say, now be proud if you can. Well, while I have any senses left, my thoughts will be poured out in the praise of God. I have an interest in Christ, in his blood and sufferings, and my sins are forgiven me. Have I not cause to praise him? When my understanding fails me quite, as I think it will soon, then he will pity my weakness."

Though the Lord intended that his warfare should be short, yet a warfare he was to have, and to be exposed to a measure of conflict with his own corruptions. His pain being extreme, his powers of recollection much impaired, and the Comforter withholding for a season his sensible support, he was betrayed into a fretfulness and impatience of spirit which had never been permitted to show itself before. This appearance alarmed me, and having an opportunity afforded me by every body's absence, I said to him,



him, "You was happier last Saturday than you are to-day. Are you entirely destitute of the consolations you then spoke of? and do you not sometimes feel comfort flowing into your heart from a sense of your acceptance with God?" He replied, "Sometimes I do, but sometimes I am left to desperation." The same day in the evening he said, "Brother, I believe you are often uneasy, lest what lately past should come to nothing." I replied, by asking him, whether, when he found his patience and his temper fail, he endeavoured to pray for power against his corruptions? He answered, "Yes, a thousand times in a day. But I see myself odiously vile and wicked. If I die in this illness, I beg you will place no other inscription over me than such as may just mention my name, and the parish where I was minister; for that I ever had a being, and what sort of a being I had, cannot be too soon forgot. I was just beginning to be a deist, and had long desired to be so; and I will own to you what I never confessed before, that my function, and the duties of it, were a weariness to me which I could not bear. Yet, wretched creature and beast as I was, I was esteemed religious, though I lived without God in the world." About this time I reminded him of the account of Janeway's, which he once read at my desire. He said he had laughed at it in his own mind, and accounted it mere madness and folly. "Yet, base as I am," said he, "I have no doubt now but God has accepted me also, and forgiven me all my sins."

I then asked him what he thought of my narrative? He replied, "I thought it strange, and ascribed much of it to the state in which you had been. When I came to visit you in London, and found you in that deep distress, I would have given the universe to have administered some comfort to you. You may remember that I tried every method of doing it. When I found that all my attempts were vain, I was shocked to the greatest degree. I began to consider your sufferings as a judgment upon you, and my inability to alleviate them as a judgment upon myself. When Mr. M. came, he succeeded in a moment. This surprised me; but it does not surprise me now. He had the key to your heart, which I had not. That which filled me with disgust against my office as a minister was the same ill success which attended me in my own parish. There I endeavoured to sooth the afflicted, and to reform the unruly by warning and reproof; but all that I could say in either case was spoken to the wind, and attended with no effect."

There is that in the nature of salvation by grace, when it is truly and experimentally known, which prompts every person to think himself the most extraordinary instance of its power. Accordingly, my brother insisted upon the precedence in this respect, and, upon comparing his case with mine, would by no means allow my deliverance to have been so wonderful as his own. He

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observed, that, "from the beginning, both his manner of life and his connexions had been such as had a natural tendency to blind his eyes, and to confirm and rivet his prejudices against the truth. Blameless in his outward conduct, and having no open immorality to charge himself with, his acquaintance had been with men of the same stamp, who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised the doctrines of the cross. Such were all who, from his earliest days, he had been used to propose to himself as patterns for his imitation. Not to go farther back; such was the clergyman under whom he received the first rudiments of his education; such was the schoolmaster, under whom he was prepared for the university; and such were all the most admired characters there, with whom he was most ambitious of being connected. He lamented the dark and Christless condition of the place, where learning and morality were all in all, and where if a man was possessed of these qualifications he neither doubted himself, nor did any body else question the safety of his state. He concluded therefore that to shew the fallacy of such appearances, and to root out the prejudices, which long familiarity with them had fastened upon his mind, required a more than ordinary exertion of divine power, and that the grace of God was more clearly manifested in such a work, than in the conversation of one like me, who had no outside righteousness to boast of, and who, if I was ignorant of the truth, was not however so desperately prejudiced against it."

His thoughts, I suppose, had been led to this subject, when one afternoon, while I was writing by the fire side, he thus addressed himself to the nurse, who sat at his bolster. "Nurse, I have lived three and thirty years, and I will tell you how I have spent them. When I was a boy they taught me Latin; and because I was the son of a gentleman they taught me Greek. These I learned under a sort of private tutor; at the age of fourteen, or thereabouts, they sent me to a public school, where I learned more Latin and Greek; and, last of all, to this place, where I have been learning more Latin and Greek still. Now has not this been a blessed life, and much to the glory of God?" then, directing his speech to me, he said, "Brother, I was going to say I was born in such a year; but I correct myself: I would rather say, in such a year I came into the world. You know when I was born."

As long as he expected to recover, the souls committed to his care were much upon his mind. One day, when none was present but myself, he prayed thus: "O Lord, thou art good; goodness is thy very essence, and thou art the fountain of wisdom. I am a poor worm, weak and foolish as a child. Thou hast intrusted many souls unto me; and I have not been able to teach them, because I knew thee not myself. Grant me ability, O Lord, for I can do nothing without thee, and give me grace to be faithful."

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In a time of severe and continual pain, he smiled in my face, and said, "Brother, I am as happy as a king." And the day before he died, when I asked him what sort of a night he had, he replied, "A sad night, not a wink of sleep." I said, "Perhaps, though, your mind has been composed, and you have been enabled to pray." "Yes," said he, "I have endeavoured to spend the hours in the thoughts of God and prayer: I have been much comforted, and all the comfort I got came to me in this way."

The next morning I was called up to be a witness of his last moments. I found him in a deep sleep, lying perfectly still, and seemingly free from pain. I staid with him till they pressed me to quit the room, and in about five minutes after I had left him he died; sooner indeed than I expected, though for some days there had been no hopes of his recovery. His death at that time was rather extraordinary; at least, I thought it so; for, when I took leave of him the night before, he did not seem worse nor weaker than he had been, and, for aught that appeared, might have lasted many days; but the Lord, in whose sight the death of his saints is precious, cut short his sufferings, and gave him a speedy and peaceful departure.—He died at seven in the morning, on the 20th of March, 1770.

"Thou art the source and centre of all minds,  
Their only point of rest, ETERNAL WORD!  
From THEE departing, they are lost and rove  
At random, without honour, hope, or peace.  
From THEE is all that soothes the life of man,  
His high endeavour and his glad success,  
His strength to suffer, and his will to serve.  
But, oh! Thou bounteous Giver of all good,  
Thou art of all thy gifts thyself the crown.  
Give what thou canst, without thee, we are poor,  
And with thee, rich, take what thou wilt away."

See TASK.

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## Religious Communications.

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### AN ADDRESS TO PROFESSORS OF RELIGION UPON THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORTING THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

BRETHREN,

1. CHRISTIANS are no benefit to the cause of Christ, unless they fill their places, as they ought; they are no advantage to the interest of religion, unless they live as Christ has directed them to live. It is worse with them, in this respect, than it is with  
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men in other stations in life. If a man in public office does not fill his place, as he ought, he may yet retain some degree of usefulness. For instance, a magistrate may fail of filling his office, as he ought, and yet not be entirely useless. A minister of the gospel may shamefully come short of his duty, in his ministerial function, and yet, it cannot be justly said of him, that he is good for nothing. But if you entirely fail of filling your places, as you ought, it may be said of you, that you are good for nothing, as to the purpose for which you as Christians are designed. Our Lord, speaking to his disciples upon this subject, said, *Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.* Christians are compared to salt, as it respects its preservative qualities. They are the *salt of the earth*, in maintaining the doctrines of godliness, and supporting examples of piety. If they wholly fail of being and doing what is required of them, they become good for nothing in their profession.

2. It is the command of Christ, that all Christians give the world unquestionable evidence of their obedience to him. No man can fulfil the duties of the Christian calling and profession, by taking a concealed station. To hide religion is the same thing as to be disobedient. The sun, moon and stars are lights, which are designed for a conspicuous place. Christians, if real, are light in the Lord. *Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.* Professors of religion answer not the purposes of Christianity, any further than the works, the worth and the character of the Christian, are seen in their lives. *Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

3. Christians are not Christians merely for themselves. To be true Christians is the only way to save our souls. But let it be remembered, that Christians are called and sanctified of God, for other and higher purposes, than merely their own salvation. Whoever is a true Christian is called, chosen, and sanctified of God; as far, therefore, as the agency of God is concerned, in providing him a Saviour, and working obedience in his heart, it is not done merely for him; it is done to bring glory to God; it is done to place him, and his good works, in open sight of men, that they may confess that the Christian is the workmanship of God. *Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.* As the candle is lighted for the benefit of all who come within its light; so light is made to shine in Christians for the benefit of their fellow men. Is it not true, that God, in all the communication of his favours, has a further object in view, than merely their good on whom his favours are bestowed? Was Abraham called of God to leave his native land, merely for his private interest? No; it

was



was for the benefit of millions in ages to come. God said to Abraham, And thou shalt be a blessing ; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Was Paul called to be an apostle to fill an honourable office in the church of God, and was he called to this honour merely for his own benefit ? No ; it was for the benefit of future ages. *Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.* Christians, then, have something further to consider, than merely their private advantage. The moment they begin to act for themselves they cease to act as Christians.

### INFERENCES.

1. How contrary to the spirit of Christianity is the sentiment of those, who say, that a religious profession is unnecessary ! Many, who would accommodate their religion to their wishes, say, we can have religion, as well in secret, as by making a public profession. But how contrary is this opinion to the express commands of Christ ! It is to extinguish the light, which he has commanded to shine. How can such persons expect that Christ will own them, in the day of his appearing, when they have been ashamed to own him before men ?

2. Is there not reason to believe, that professed Christians, by their impiety, do great injury to the cause of Christ ? It is probably true, that many, by their unfaithfulness to Christ, do more injury to the interests of religion, than is done by all the combined exertions of infidels. How many are there, who are good for nothing, as to the great purpose for which Christians are designed ? How many, who are neither useful, nor ornamental to the Christian cause ? How many, who are stumbling blocks over which unbelievers fall ?

Every man's religion becomes questionable when he is no honour to Christ. Ask yourself, O careless professor, whether, on the whole, the cause of Christ does not suffer on account of your unfaithfulness ? For this purpose consider your neglect of prayer, and your careless life. Dost thou fill the place, which a true Christian ought to fill ? Art thou in all the relations of life, what a follower of Christ must be, to *adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things* ? Dost thou impress the minds of sinners, that the life of Christ is made manifest in your mortal body ? What a heavy charge will come against all persons in the great day, who have been a real injury to Christianity !

JUSTUS.

MESSRS.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

*The following letter, which was written to a member of my parish a few weeks before his death, because of his unwillingness to receive my personal visits, is submitted to your disposal.* E. K.

*Dear Friend,*

IT is from regard to what I esteem duty and your soul's eternal well being, that I take the labour of this friendly epistle. Dear Sir, receive it as from a friend; for, be assured, it is from motives of friendship I am prompted to write you, in the alarming situation, in which I am induced to believe you are.

From the conversation I had with you before the alarming onset of your disorder, I was led to exercise very tender emotions of sympathetic pity, in the view of your situation, with relation to your supreme Creator, his righteous law, your own immortal soul, and another world, upon which subjects we were wide in sentiment.

Allowing, dear Sir, for a moment, your ideas upon these subjects to be true: What have you gained? Suppose, for instance, that regeneration, or a being made a new creature, be not essential to salvation: A person, who has been the subject of regeneration, enjoys in this world, to say the least, equal happiness with you, who believe in no such change. The Christian, who is a renewed man, says and realizes as did the Psalmist, "In keeping thy commands there is great reward." Now, God has commanded all men every where to repent; to exercise holy faith in him and in our Lord Jesus Christ; to love him with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, and to love our neighbour as ourselves; *to make us new hearts*; i. e. to possess new tempers of mind, new dispositions, agreeably to the sacred text. "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." Sir, the Christian, in the exercise of repentance, godly sorrow for sin, faith toward God and our Lord Jesus Christ, which faith supposes a cordial reception of him as Prophet, Priest and King, as great a willingness to be ruled by his laws as to be saved by his meritorious sufferings and death; the Christian, who is the regenerated man, in the exercise of love to God's being and attributes, law and government, in the exercise of brotherly love and all the Christian virtues; the Christian, I say, in this transformed state, enjoys more real happiness, even in this imperfect life, than all the unregenerated part of mankind. Perhaps, Sir, you do not accredit what I now state: but, Sir, why will you not believe these declarations? They are such as Christians make: That they are true, there is as much evidence as the nature of the case will admit. Christians have been over the same ground that you have been over; they were  
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once in the same situation, believed and disbelieved, received and rejected, loved and hated the moral subjects, which you now do. They have been led by divine grace to change their sentiments and views of religion, have experienced a change of heart, or affections, and are now in a situation to *judge righteous judgment*. They discourse with you upon religious things, not as those who have had only a speculative knowledge of them, but experimental. Having been on your ground, they know what it is; and, having experienced the power of true religion upon their minds, they are certainly under better circumstances of knowing the truth respecting it, than unexperienced persons. It is a given point, that experience is the best instructor, that it will teach what cannot be learned without it. Christians have experienced the power of true religion upon their hearts: *you* make no such claim. *They*, therefore, must be the better judges. They say there is a great gain of happiness in the exercise of holy, religious affections. So there is nothing gained, *in the present world*, by cleaving to, and being actuated by sentiments like yours; but the gain is on the side of Christians.

Now, dear Sir, (allow me plainness of speech) what if your system should prove a delusion? *It may not be true!* There is a possibility of your being under a mistake about things of infinite importance! What if it should be found, in the great and solemn day of final judgment, that none but such as have been born of the holy Spirit of God, in this world, can be admitted into the kingdom of heaven? *This may be found true!* If it should, is not the man, who has experienced the regenerating influences of the Divine Spirit, in this world, seeing this is our only state of probation; is not *this* man a fairer candidate for future felicity than yourself, who will not believe, and have not experienced the transforming influences of such doctrines, attended by divine power? The truth is, for Christians to *live* is *Christ*, and to *die* is *gain*; or, as the margin, Christ is our *gain* in life and death. The meaning is, the renewed child of God is a *gainer both here and hereafter*. Do, Sir, think on these things. They are full of important meaning.

But, methinks I am conversing with a dying man! Your physicians *say*, your friends *think*, and you, no doubt, *believe, you must soon die!* Soon must you see developed before you the interesting realities of eternity. You are soon to enter upon a state of happiness or misery *in eternal prospect!* Which of these, my friend, is to be your lot, is known only to him, who hath the keys of death and hell, who will sit your final Judge, and before whose righteous tribunal you are soon to stand, and be rewarded according to the character you will be found to have sustained when you left this world, whether it be good or whether it be evil! Is God a Being of perfect *veracity*? You profess to believe he is. Then  
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he will be as punctilious in the execution of his threatenings, as in the fulfilment of his promises. Your sins, O Sir, have merited eternal death! And, *remember*, there are a guard of cherubim and flaming swords stationed at the entrance of paradise, to keep the way of the tree of life. The transgressor cannot enter and partake of the tree of life and live forever, *but by a living faith in the bleeding Saviour*. For the sake of your immortal soul, dear friend, even now *lay hold on this only hope*. Your glass is well nigh run; and when the last sand shall have fallen, your condition in happiness, or misery, will be unalterably fixed! Pardon me when I so freely, and from motives of love to your precious soul, at once express my fears of the genuineness of your hope of future felicity, and my solemn concern for your future welfare. This, Sir, is your only state of probationary trial. *As you die, so you must remain*. He that is holy then, shall be holy still, and he that is filthy shall be filthy still. Leave, then, O leave not the world in a graceless state. Give not up the ghost till you become a subject of regeneration. Launch not upon the boundless ocean of eternity till you are possessed of vital holiness. Appear not before the awful bar of an offended Judge, till you are clad in the seamless robe of the almighty Saviour's righteousness.

As one, who expects soon to meet you before our common Judge, I present you, as a pledge of my friendship, these addresses. My prayers accompany this epistle. Adieu.

K——g Jan. 1806.

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BRIEF SURVEY OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY IN A SERIES OF LETTERS TO A STUDENT IN ——— UNIVERSITY, BY HIS FATHER.

### Letter VI. Century V.

Continued from page 257.

*My dear Son,*

IN this letter I shall exhibit to your view the leading events, which happened in the Christian church, during the fifth century.

In the beginning of this century the Roman empire was divided into two distinct sovereignties, of which the *one* comprehended the eastern provinces, in which were the seven churches of Asia, mentioned by St. John, in the Revelation, and many other churches; the *other* comprehended what were called the western provinces, which were situated in Europe.

At this period the Roman empire began rapidly to decline. Many hostile incursions were made into it by several barbarous nations, the result of which was, that many fair provinces of the empire



empire were laid waste. The western emperors soon deprived those of the east of the substance of their power and authority, and left them in possession of the shadow only. The constant wars which were carried on between the Roman emperors and the neighbouring barbarous nations, and between themselves, were productive of inexpressible calamities. It is nevertheless to be observed that idolatry, upon the whole, declined, and the Christian religion, as to its limits, became extended. Both in the East and West several nations embraced the gospel. This was also the case with no inconsiderable number of Jews.

In this century the gospel was preached in Ireland, and with considerable success. It is recorded by several of the historians of this age, that many remarkable prodigies happened, and that many astonishing miracles were performed, to which they assign, in some considerable degree, the spread of Christianity; but by the most judicious and respectable writers in the church, it is believed that, in general, those wonderful accounts have little or no foundation. But notwithstanding the Christian religion was, in a considerable degree, extended in this century, yet Christians, in many places, suffered much rigorous treatment, and many severe distresses, arising partly from the invasion of the Roman empire by barbarous nations, and partly from domestic and secret enemies. In Great Britain, particularly, a long series of tumults involved the Christian inhabitants in many grievous and distressing troubles; during the continuance of which, the British church was in a situation deplorable beyond expression. It was almost totally overwhelmed and extinguished by their heathen neighbours. An immense number were cruelly put to death.

With respect to the state of learning and philosophy, in this century, but little can be said of a favourable nature. However, schools were established in several great cities, in which the arts and sciences were taught, yet even in these literary institutions but very little solid and useful knowledge was acquired. The culture of science was confined to a few individuals; and even among these, learning degenerated from its ancient lustre, and assumed, in general, a very unseemly and fantastic form. Ignorance and darkness were generally prevalent. This observation more particularly applies to the western empire. In the East, polite literature and solid science were cultivated with more success.

In this century a very considerable change took place in the government of the church. The power of the bishops or ministers was much increased, particularly the power of the bishops of Rome and Constantinople. These dignitaries of the church were exalted not only to a very high summit of ecclesiastical, but of civil power. Being vested with equal powers and dignities, a spirit of jealousy and rivalry soon sprung up between them, and an obstinate contention was carried on for supremacy. The bish-

op of Jerusalem, also, aspired after a place among the first prelates in the church. These ambitious and unworthy contentions among those, who ought to have been the meek and humble followers of Jesus in their views and pursuits, were the occasion of calling several councils to adjust and settle existing differences. The result was, that five superior rulers of the church were created, who were distinguished from the rest, by the title of *Patriarchs*; and who were vested with distinguished rights and privileges. To them alone belonged the right of consecrating bishops in the provinces under their jurisdiction. The cognizance of all important causes, and the decision of all weighty controversies, were also referred to them.

The patriarchal authority and government of the church were attended with many inconveniences and evils. They proved a perpetual source of dissensions and animosities, not only among Christians at large, but among the bishops and inferior officers of the church. To these evils it is to be added, that the vices of the clergy in general were carried to an enormous height. Luxury, arrogance, avarice and voluptuousness most astonishingly prevailed among the greater part of the clergy, particularly those of the higher order. But notwithstanding this gloomy state of the church, it was ornamented with several distinguished luminaries. Such were Cyril, Theodoret, Theophilus, &c. As to the doctrines of religion, these were understood and explained in a manner, which bore but little resemblance to their intrinsic purity and simplicity. Disputes and controversies were greatly multiplied throughout the Christian world; the most important of which respected the nature and person of Christ, the innate corruption or depravity of man, his natural ability to live according to the requirement of the divine law, the necessity of supernatural or divine grace in order to salvation, the existence and nature of human liberty, &c.

These points of controversy were highly interesting and important, but they were generally handled in such a manner and with such a spirit, as to diffuse darkness rather than light, and to cherish bad, rather than good affections. In connexion with these ill conducted controversies, it is to be observed, that superstition and enthusiasm daily gained ground. Of all the instances of superstitious frenzy that distinguished this age, none was held in higher veneration, or more excited the wonder of the multitude, than that of a certain class of men denominated *Stilites*, who, from religious motives, erected pillars, some of prodigious height, on the tops of which they placed themselves, and there remained for years; some to the day of their death. The founder of this sect, whose name was Simeon, passed thirty seven years of his wretched life upon pillars of different heights, one of which was forty cubits, or sixty feet. By this whimsical and strange conduct he acquired the most shining



shining reputation for sanctity, and arrested the veneration of all around him. To what a height must superstition have been generally carried in this dark and deplorable state of the church!

The rites and ceremonies of the church were multiplied, in this century, to a very astonishing degree. Several writers of this period, who kept themselves from the general contagion of the times, represent real religion as almost smothered under an enormous load of superstitious fopperies. Divine worship was continually rising from one degree of outward pomp and ceremony to another, suited only to attract the gaze of stupidity and the admiration of ignorance and superstition. The priests' garments were superb, and embellished with a variety of splendid ornaments. The riches and magnificence of the churches, which were ornamented with costly images, exceeded all bounds. The altars and the chests, in which sacred relicks were preserved, were, in most places, made of solid silver. From these examples we may easily imagine the splendour and expenses which were lavished upon the other utensils, which were employed in the service of the church, and the glare and pomp which accompanied the public, religious solemnities.

With relation to the divisions and heresies, which troubled the church in this century, it is generally to be observed, that they were many and various. To descend into a minute detail of them would not only be tedious, but inconsistent with my plan. The leading sects were those denominated orthodox, or Trinitarian, and the Arian. These sects, which had previously existed, became now divided, in a considerable degree, among themselves, as well as extremely obnoxious to each other. Their disputes were carried on with great acrimony and bitterness, and in some instances were productive of the most sanguinary persecution. Each of two great sects became, through the instrumentality of varying circumstances, alternately, the most numerous and powerful. But on which side soever the balance of power happened, the other was sure to be persecuted and oppressed in the most unreasonable and unchristianlike manner. During this vibration of parties, when the Arians were the most powerful, Huneric, the emperor, who sided with the Arian sect, ordered the tongues of a very considerable number of the Trinitarians to be cut out. This scandalous and cruel mandate was executed. But notwithstanding the unhappy sufferers were thus deprived of the natural organ of speech, yet, of speech itself, they were not deprived, if credence may be given to the testimony of very credible witnesses. Unawed by their unfeeling persecutors, and constrained by a sense of duty, they spake, distinctly spake, and proclaimed aloud the divine majesty of the great and glorious Saviour. This remarkable event, (admitting it to have been a fact) was considered as a stupendous miracle, effected by the special interposition of almighty power, and

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as indubitable proof of the divine displeasure against the Arians on the one hand, and of the divine favour towards the Trinitarian party on the other. But confident as the Trinitarians might be, that the truth of their cause was supported by miraculous interposition, the reality of such interposition, ought not, too hastily, to be admitted.

The controversies which were carried on between these and other sects were generally attended with more heat than light, and served rather to widen, than to close the breach between them; nor were the results of councils effectual to the settlement of the unhappy disputes which agitated the church. This was indeed very far from being the case. One council favoured one party, another, favoured the opposite party. Council assembled against council, and decree was passed against decree. Hence, instead of harmony and peace, division and discord greatly increased, and the church was reduced to a condition truly wretched and deplorable.

You have now had a brief survey of the leading events which occurred in the church during the fifth century; from which you learn,

Not only that the grandeur and prowess of the Roman empire, but the purity, the peace and prosperity of the church were rapidly on the decline. This, you must perceive, was in a great measure owing to the general spread of ignorance and luxury. These, when they become generally prevalent, are incompatible both with the political and religious welfare of society.

While the Roman empire was distinguished by its patronage of literature and the arts of utility, and by the culture of habits of industry and economy, it was preeminent in prosperity and happiness; but when these important objects began to be neglected, they were succeeded by luxury and extravagance, pusillanimity and weakness. Soon this mighty empire, like Samson, when deprived of his locks, lost its strength, and became an object of derision, or rather it became a striking archetype to the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's visionary image, which were composed, as well of clay, as of iron. Nor was it long before, like the feet of that image, it was broken in pieces and became as chaff before the wind. The great decline of religion in this century, with respect to its purity, its peaceable and happy effects, is, in no small degree, to be traced up to the same pernicious sources, ignorance and luxury. How important, then, how necessary is it to the prosperity of communities, whether political or religious, that useful arts and sciences be liberally patronized, that knowledge be generally diffused, and that habits of industry and economy be assiduously cultivated? Without these, neither good principles nor good morals can be preserved. "To be without knowledge it is not good" neither in a political or religious point of view; nor without good morals can the prosperity either of church or state be secured. Happy would it be for the Christian world, were they, at this period



period of their gloomy and distressful visitation, to know and duly improve the things which belong to their peace and happiness ; and happy for these United States, were they, regarding the divine admonition, "to enter into their chambers and shut the doors about them, until the indignation be overpast." While the Lord is coming out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity ; while his judgments are abroad in the world, O that this highly favoured, though highly sinful people, might learn righteousness, that they might be safe in the day of evil !

From the review you have taken of the luxury and arrogance, the avarice and voluptuousness of many of the clergy in this period, you may be ready to ask, why were these scandalous practices tolerated ? Why did Christian churches suffer their ministers thus to disgrace the sacredness of their office, and scandalize the humility and holiness of their profession ? The answer is ready ; They would not have suffered these disgraceful practices in their religious instructors, had it not been that they themselves, in general, were blinded by the grossest superstition and sunk into depths of ignorance and vice. It is not greatly to be wondered at, that the priests were thus corrupt, when it is remembered, that "the people loved to have it so." A corrupt and profligate people *will*, in all ordinary cases, have a corrupt and profligate ministry. The current adage, *like priest, like people*, is equally true when reversed. It is seldom the case that a people elect a man for their religious teacher, whose sentiments, views, and general habits are not analogous to their own. Although the corruption of the people can furnish no reasonable excuse for the corruption of their ministers, yet it is not to be expected, generally, that the people will have ministers sound in the faith and sound in morals, while they themselves are heretical and dissolute. Were Christian societies earnestly to contend for the faith, which was once delivered to the saints, and heedfully to walk by that rule, little would be the danger of their having men for their instructors,

———" Loose in morals, and in manners vain ;  
In conversation frivolous—  
And well prepar'd, by ignorance and sloth,  
By infidelity and love of th' world,  
To make God's work a sinecure."

Were Christian societies truly desirous of it, it is believed that they would, at least in general, be blessed with teachers whom the Great Head of the church would approve, as men after his own heart ; men

———" Simple, grave, sincere ;  
In doctrine uncorrupt, in language plain ;  
And plain in manner. Decent, solemn, chaste,  
———Much impress'd  
Themselves, as conscious of their awful charge ;  
And anxious, mainly, that the flocks they feed  
May feel it too."—

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That men of this description universally might be introduced, as labourers into the vineyard of the Great Husbandman, how does it become the true friends of Zion ardently to long and importunately to pray! Lord, hasten this so desirable event, by preparing thy people for its accomplishment.

The disputes and controversies which, in this period, were so generally prevalent, and conducted with so much zeal and virulence, and which were productive of so little light and satisfaction, remain unsettled to the present day. Although the subjects, to which they related, have, from that day to this, been controversially discussed, and by the ablest pens, yet still there remains a great diversity, and even opposition of opinion respecting them. How is this to be accounted for? Can it reasonably be supposed, that the character of Christ, the character of man, with relation to depravity and freedom of agency, and the operations of divine grace on the soul in order to its qualification for future happiness, &c.; can it reasonably be supposed that these subjects are unintelligibly expressed in the book of God, or expressed so obscurely, that the honest and inquiring mind must be at a loss rightly to understand them? This you will probably think, and with good reason, is inadmissible. Whence then arises so great a diversity, and even opposition in opinion, respecting them? Where there is clashing and opposition of sentiment among men, with respect to these subjects, you will readily perceive that some must be chargeable with error, error which is "great and palpable." But is not error of this kind to be traced to an evil heart of unbelief, as its true and baneful source; a heart in love with darkness rather than light; a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked? If any man do the will of God, shall he not know of doctrine? Will he not, in things essential and important, discover truth from error? In these things the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err. Error in religion, generally, if not universally, takes its rise from sinful blindness or depravity of heart. It is, therefore, as inexcusable, as it is dangerous.

That light has not been thrown upon these subjects, it is not intended to insinuate. Controvertists, and those especially of modern times, have, with ability, and in a luminous manner, discussed them. Their controversies have, like the collision between flint and steel, struck out many sparks of truth, which, it should seem, must be visible to all whose vision is not greatly obscured by an intervening veil. To decide on which side of the controversy the truth is to be found, is not my present object. My sentiments on the subjects in question are, generally, known to you. If yours be not already established, the best advice I can give you is, diligently, prayerfully, and with a mind open to conviction, to examine what faith the scriptures respecting them.

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The virulence and persecuting spirit with which controversy on these subjects was conducted in the century, which you have passed in review, should remind you that such wrath is as far from "working the righteousness of God," as it is from producing "peace and good will among men." It is to be censured and condemned as unworthy the character of men, considered either as Christians or social beings. As you are connected with theological societies, in which religious subjects are discussed, it is my hope and expectation that you will attend with candour to whatever arguments may be adduced in favour of, or against any subject under discussion, and give it all the weight to which it shall have any reasonable claim; and that, should you take a part yourself in the discussion, you will neither dispute with an irascible temper, nor with the selfish view to victory or of triumph. Dispute but with the meekness of wisdom, and you will neither be elated with success, nor mortified by a defeat; and should you fail of imparting instruction and benefit to your opponent, you will seldom, if ever, fail of receiving them yourself.

I wish to impress it on your mind that you may, on no consideration, indulge malevolent designs, or cherish resentful feelings towards an opponent, however uncandid he may be, however unfairly he may treat you, or however great may be his errors. The true spirit of Christianity exercises benevolence, or good will to all men, to all beings susceptible of either of misery or happiness. Let the religious errors of others be ever so great, even "damnable heresies," this will by no means justify a spirit of persecution, malignity or ill-will against them. Charity or benevolence, when genuine, is diffusive. It embraces all; as well heretics, as those who are sound in the faith, and enemies, as well as friends. By this, however, I would not be understood as insinuating that the law of charity obliges you either to entertain a favourable opinion, or to exercise Christian complacency towards errorists indiscriminately. This is very far from being the case. Real Christians may err, and undoubtedly do so, in relation to religious subjects: but their errors are, comparatively, of but minor importance. This circumstance should by no means supercede or prevent your exercising towards them brotherly affection, or the charity of complacency. But religious errors do exist, and it is to be apprehended that they are numerous, which carry convincing evidence, that the subjects of them are in that state of moral darkness which is inconsistent with the Christian character. The ways of such errors, however right they may appear to those who embrace them, "are the ways of death." But shall I recommend it to, or enjoin it upon you, to exercise towards such characters, cordial affection, or a love of complacency and satisfaction? No, my son; God forbid. To exercise this affection towards such objects would be to side with that wisdom which is from beneath

neath, in opposition to that which is from above ; it would be to countenance and approve of moral darkness, and to discountenance and disapprove of moral light. Indeed, the exercise of this affection towards such objects is as impracticable, as it is foreign from duty. The friend of truth, as such, can never exercise affections of complacency towards the advocate of fundamental error, in a religious view, or towards any one, whom he considers as such an advocate. Between such opposite characters there can be no cordial union or Christian fellowship. But were the probability of this union and fellowship between such opposite characters, so remaining, admitted, it would not only be highly unreasonable, but highly impious to attempt it. While it is my heart's desire and prayer to God that you may possess the most diffusive benevolence, let me solemnly enjoin it upon you never to suffer your soul, your affections, to be joined with the sentimentally, or the practically wicked.

From the view you have had of the senseless fopperies, and of the pomp and splendour which were introduced into the worship of God, are you not ready to conclude, that these things were better adapted to amuse the fancy, to cherish pride, and excite the belief that religion, in a great measure at least, consists in the magnificence and splendour of outward appearance, than in the exercises of the inner man of the soul ? This conclusion it is believed is but too just. May you receive from it the impression of true wisdom. Remembering that God looketh not upon the outward appearance, but upon the heart, and that he requireth truth in the inner man of the soul, let it be your great concern, whether you worship God in a splendid edifice, or in the seclusion of the closet, to do it in spirit and in truth. With worshippers of this description, only, is the great Object of worship pleased. Such only does he seek. Give to God, then, the affections of your heart. This is a reasonable and a necessary service.

When you contemplate the superstition of the *Stilites* in mounting themselves upon pillars of prodigious height, and in this way attempting to climb, as near as possible, to heaven ; and in indulging the belief, that they should by this mean become more holy and celestial in their affections, you may be ready to exclaim, infatuated men ! distracted visionaries ! Is this the effect of rational religion ! Surely the humbling religion of the lowly Jesus, never seeks to shine on elevated heights like these ! But, my dear son, moderate your sensations, nor let your exclams overleap the bounds of sober moderation. Remember, that although true religion does not seek to shine in such elevated situations, to attract the gaze and excite the admiration of men, it is equally true, that she does not seek to confine her light under a bed, or to the narrow limits of a bushel. Embrace, then, and cherish that religion, which, avoiding these two extremes, delights to shine before men with a mild but cheering lustre.

N—E.

To be continued.

PERSEVERING



## Selections.

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### PERSEVERING PRAYER HONoured; OR, GREAT EVENTS FROM SMALL BEGINNINGS.

ILLUSTRATED IN THE CASE OF ELIJAH.

AFTER the contest with Baal's priests, in which truth prevailed over error, and the honour of Jehovah was vindicated by a sign from heaven, idolatry was overturned, and its advocates were either silenced or slain; but, to shew that God delighteth in mercy, and that when judgment is inflicted, it is from necessity, not from pleasure; no sooner does Israel renounce idolatry, than a pardoning God promises to withdraw that famine, under which they have long been suffering, through the want of rain. No sooner had God promised to shower salvation upon suffering Israel, than we are told that "Ahab went up to eat and to drink; and Elijah went up to the top of Carmel: and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees; and said to his servant, Go up now and look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times: and it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand." 1 Kings xviii. 42—44. While the *conduct* of this prophet holds out an example worthy of our imitation, his *success* is calculated to encourage us to persevere in the same duty.

Let us notice his *conduct*. Ahab and Elijah had separated; but Ahab went, not to humble himself before that God whom he had insulted; not to reproach Jezebel for her bad counsel; not to devise means whereby he might honour God, and bless his country; but he went to eat and to drink; to console his beloved Jezebel on the loss of her priests and her God; and to regale himself in the prospect of approaching plenty. On the contrary, Elijah seeks retirement. After the painful, but honourable service of the day, he climbs the mount of Carmel; there to obtain, not food for himself, but God's favour to Israel. There his faith feeds on the promise, while his prayer is filled with ardent supplications to obtain the blessings it held out. In the evening, his God had answered him by fire from heaven; but now he pleads, that he would bless Israel with abundance of rain.

What deep humility appeared in his address! "He cast himself down upon the earth." Behold the man who, on the preceding evening, stood before Israel, honoured and obeyed as the prophet of Jehovah, now prostrating himself on the ground,—rising gradually on his knees! but, still to shew how greatly God was to be feared, even by a prophet, when he approached him, he bows

down his head to the earth. Prayer is indeed the proper exercise of the heart. In it the soul wrestles with God for a blessing. In vain do we draw near him with our lips, if the heart be far from him. Though bodily exercise can profit little, yet, even that should bear some correspondence with the disposition of the mind. Those honours which earthly sovereigns confer on their subjects are generally received on their knees. Let us, therefore, come and *kneel* before the Lord our Maker: and were the pulpits and pews in all our places of worship suitably accommodated for such a position in our public addresses, it might be as proper. In particular cases of advanced age, or bodily infirmity, a sitting posture may be necessary; but when it is the habitual practice of healthy individuals, or of whole congregations, to sit during the time of prayer, the appearance is not only indecent, but inexcusable. Elijah prostrated himself in the presence of God; and were it the general practice of worshippers to kneel in prayer, to stand while they sing, and to sit while hearing the sermon, it would be productive, not only of greater variety, and of sweeter harmony, but of stricter attention. But where the people sit to sing, to pray, and to hear, can we wonder to behold so many nodding heads, or drowsy countenances, when they should be all attention?

Great *earnestness* was also manifest on this occasion. His heart was fixed and fervent. He continued, and probably long wrestling for that blessing so much needed by Israel. His God and his servant (whom some suppose to have been that son of the Shunamite, born in answer to a promise, and afterwards restored to life as a miracle of God's power) were the only witnesses of this solemn scene. Often as the servant had looked at his master, he does not appear to have interrupted him in his devotion but once. In compliance with the prophet's order, he went and looked toward the sea; and, upon his return, saying, *There is nothing*, the prophet bade him go yet seven times; that is, though he was to repeat his visits again and again, he wished not to be interrupted in his devotion, till the discovery was obtained. Not a word, nor so much as a whisper was to be heard! It was the inward devotion of the heart; the wrestling of the mind: earnest, fervent, inwrought prayer. The servant went, and came. Probably, upon every repeated visit to the summit of the mount, as well as upon his return to the place where he had left his master, he might make some stay; yet he always found his master in the same place, and in the same position. Still he continued in prayer. Could we have read the language of his heart, when there was not a word on his tongue, it would have been to the following effect: "Lord, as I was yesterday called to be an advocate for thee, I now appear as an intercessor for Israel. Follow the convictions they then felt, with an effectual impression on their minds. Forgive the iniquity of this people. Do not abhor them, for thy name's sake. Remember



her them in great mercy ; and break not thy covenant with them. I cannot let thee go till thou grant a blessed rain, to render a barren land fruitful ; and to convince them that there is a God and a prophet in Israel."

Confidence gave vigour to his earnestness in this prayer. It was the prayer of faith : founded, not on the mighty power of God, or the general goodness of God, but on his gracious promise. Before the least exhalation appeared from the sea, or a cloud to indicate the approach of a shower ; while the heavens were as a heated furnace above, and the earth like fuel, half consumed beneath, Elijah had been commissioned to assure Ahab, that rain was coming in abundance. The prophet, therefore, might be certain that the promise would be fulfilled ; but, to let us see that while promises furnish matter for prayer, Elijah, by prayer and supplication, makes known his request to God. Instead of going, like Ahab, to eat and drink ; or retiring to Carmel, there to sit still in his sloth ; instead of, with some, saying, " If it is to be, it will be ; my prayers will neither frustrate nor forward the performance of the promise," he pleaded with God to bestow that blessing he had promised. He believed that he should have the blessing, before he asked it ; and, therefore, he would give God no rest till he had obtained it.

Perseverance in prayer accompanied his confidence. Though God seemed to tarry, the prophet kept waiting for him, and pleading with him. His servant was probably more impatient, while running backwards and forwards so frequently without success. Six times had the young man gone and returned ; but he saw nothing. How happy would he be on the seventh to break the silence, saying, " I see a cloud like a man's hand, rise out of the sea !" As if he had said, " O, my father, give over thy pleading ! thou hast had power with God, and hast prevailed ! Thy prayer is heard. Yes : I have seen, as it were, the hand of God, as that of a man, rising out of the sea, to subscribe his amen to all thy petitions. Only, master, rise, behold, and acknowledge it thyself !" Thus,

" To patient faith the prize is sure."

Let this prophet's success in pleading encourage God's children to persevere in prayer. The servant said, " Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea," &c. In this, as in many other instances, we behold great effects arising from very small beginnings. Things, which at first appeared almost insignificant, have enlarged into very extensive blessings. This cloud, which appeared no bigger than what might have been covered by a man's hand, kept gradually ascending, and extending itself, till at last it covered the whole sky. Thus also hath it been with truth in the church, with grace in the heart, with efforts to promote the interests

ests of religion in particular places, and with the diffusion of happiness in the world.

In taking a view of the rise and spread of divine truth in the church, we behold it rising like a man's hand out of the ocean of human misery, in the first promise of God after man's fall: I will put enmity between the serpent and the woman, and between the seed of this and of that; but in bruising the heel of the one, the head of the other shall be crushed. Probably, at first, this promise would appear to these progenitors of mankind dark, obscure and insignificant. But it has proved a cloud full of blessings, which have often refreshed and made glad the city of God. Rising out of its former obscurity, it has extended itself wider and wider, till it has become amplified into all those exceeding great and precious promises, which now appear yea and amen in Christ Jesus. For what is the whole Bible but the first promise expanded, illustrated, and applied? It was no less than Christ, grace, glory and immortality in the promise.

The same may be said of grace in the heart. Like this cloud, or like a grain of mustard-seed, to which it is compared in scripture, hardly perceptible at first, it unites with the soil, swells, germinates, bursts the shell, springs up, forms itself into branches, and extends them till the birds come and lodge under its shadow. While the mind is under concern and conviction, grace remains hid under a cloud of obscurity. In appearance it is all cloud; but there is a blessing behind, which, like a hand, brings help, and works deliverance. Thus, that work of grace, which commences in conviction, advances to a serious concern, increases with hopes, which are often beclouded with fears, gradually becomes like the shining light, or like this extending cloud, issues in all the blessedness of salvation. Increasing with the increase of God, it grows up toward a perfect man in Christ, till it attain to the mark of the stature of his fulness. Take courage, O ye timid followers of the compassionate Jesus. He that hath begun his good work in you will preserve and perform it till he has perfected that which concerneth you.

Efforts to promote the interest of religion, in particular places, like this little cloud, have afterwards been greatly extended. A Cornelius has prayed in private; or two or three who feared the Lord have conversed together, and united in prayer, for the direction and blessing of God upon their liberal designs. The Lord has hearkened, heard and answered the prayers which his Spirit indited in their hearts. A messenger from divine mercy has been sent amongst them. One, like the Philippian jailor, has heard and trembled; another, like Lydia, found her heart opened to attend to the word preached; a third, like the wandering Onesimus, has been impressed by the very same truth upon which he had formerly turned his back. The prayers of a pious few have proved like the  
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the dew from heaven, to water the seed disseminated by the faithful minister. Others were inclined to hear, and made to feel the power of divine truth. A church was formed, the congregation increased, the handful of corn was greatly multiplied, the little one became a thousand. The cry then was, Lengthen the cords, and strengthen the stakes. Thus, like this cloud, they were collected to scatter blessings all around. Not only on this little hill, but upon individuals and families around them, the showers have come down in their season, even showers of blessings; while fresh converts have sprung up as the grass, or have flourished as willows by the water courses.

Like this cloud, the diffusion of happiness in the world has originated from very small beginnings. Witness the first introduction of the gospel in Judea, and afterwards into Britain; and witness societies, which have been formed and succeeded, for the spread of the gospel, the promoting of religious knowledge, or the sending of Missionaries to the Heathen: others, for distributing Bibles at home and abroad, in our fleets and our armies: and who can tell but the humiliations and prayers of the late fast-day may be productive of extensive blessings, hastening on that day, when all the kingdoms of the earth shall submit themselves to Jesus Christ, and the world be filled with his glory? Blessed day! when peace shall look down from heaven, and war shall no longer desolate the earth.

While that cloud of gospel grace, which originally appeared in Judea, has extended itself even to us, let us severally inquire whether, as individuals, it has proved to our souls a shower of mercy, which, bringing salvation, maketh barren hearts fruitful?

Let us also take notice of the connexion there is between prayer and providence. View this in the abolition of the slave trade; in the prosperity of the gospel in particular places; and in the spread of it in the world. Though the Saviour be yet clothed with a cloud, soon will he shine forth, as the sun in its strength, and then all the nations of the earth will see and rejoice in the salvation of our God.

[*Ev. Mag.*

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#### ANECDOTE.

THE late Rev. John Johnson was a man, whose zeal for the propagation of the gospel exposed him to severe trials. A person, it is stated, who had already been foiled in an attempt to insult Mr. Johnson, resolved to embrace another opportunity of venting his rage. Some days afterward, coming out of the country, he overtook a person driving an empty cart. He got into it, and, full of his purpose, began to tell of the preparations he had made, and of what he would do to the preacher. After talking with much indignation and profaneness on this subject, he laid himself with his face downward in the cart, and apparently fell asleep. Having driven into the town, the carter called to him, and shook him for the purpose of awakening him; but, turning him on his back, behold! the persecutor was dead! *A View*

## Review.

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*A View of the Economy of the Church of God, as it existed primitively under the Abrahamic Dispensation and the Sinai Law ; and as it is perpetuated under the more luminous dispensation of the gospel ; particularly in regard to the covenants. By Samuel Austin, D. D. Worcester. Thomas & Sturtevant. 1807.*

THE subject, upon which this volume is written, is interesting to individual believers, to the church, and to the world. Interesting however as the subject is, it has hitherto been involved in no inconsiderable obscurity ; particularly that part of it, which respects the relation, in which the children of believers stand to the covenant and to the church. Contradictory theories upon the subject have been exhibited, and advocated by different writers ; and in the clouds and smoke of controversy, the inquirer after truth has been in danger of being bewildered and lost. Of the Abrahamic covenant different views have been entertained ; and an attention to its nature, the extent of its promises, and to its perpetuity, has been too much neglected. By many writers, not only among the Anabaptists, but also among the Pedobaptists, the ancient community of Israel has been represented in a manner, which disrobes it of every thing spiritual, and of course of its peculiar glory ; and in a manner calculated to lead to the conclusion, that God had in reality no visible church in the world till after the advent of the Messiah.

Laying aside the theories of fallible men, the author has taken the Bible for his guide, and in a manner, which evinces diligence in research, closeness of attention, and ability and judgment in comparing scripture with scripture, has exhibited a view of the Hebrew economy, as established by Jehovah, from its rise in the call of Abraham and the covenant made with him, to its consummation in the Christian church.

The work is divided into fifteen chapters. The division and arrangement are natural and pertinent. The fourth chapter contains an analysis of the covenant of circumcision. In this analysis the nature and extent of the promises made to Abraham are clearly shown ; it is shown with equal clearness, who the seed are, to whom the promises have respect ; and the perpetuity of the covenant is clearly demonstrated. In this chapter much light is exhibited, with respect to the covenant established with Abraham. The promises established, and the inferences made from them in this chapter, are highly interesting. The subject is treated in a manner, which is new, and which is calculated to enlighten the understanding, and interest the feelings. The reader of the work will do well to attend to this chapter particularly, before he proceeds further, as the truths, which it contains, are at the foundation of many things brought into view in the subsequent parts of the volume.

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The sixth chapter, which respects the covenants of Sinai and Moab, is interesting. It contains much elucidation; evinces the impropriety of considering the Hebrew community as a civil society and not a religious; and shows that every thing in the laws and establishments of that community was designed to act in subserviency to this great end, the preservation of the purity of their faith and worship; and that religion and the real interests of the church were manifestly not the means, but the end.

A particular examination of each chapter would exceed the intended limits of this review. The membership of infants in the Jewish and Christian church is established, and the manner shown in which they ought to be treated by adult believers. Upon this part of the subject, which is kept in view as one leading object of the whole work, the author has exhibited much light, and has made many new and interesting remarks. The concluding chapter, which contains deductions from the preceding chapters and addresses, is pertinent and feeling.

This volume is calculated in many respects above any other work which has yet appeared, to put an end to the Anti-pedobaptist scheme, and to convince its advocates, that *that* is not the scheme of the Bible, nor the scheme of God.

The whole work exhibits the unity of the church of God from the calling of Abraham to the present time, and from the present time to the consummation of all things; it exhibits the church as a glorious building, erected and finished in a manner becoming the dignity and glory of him, *who filleth all in all*.

The work is circulating, and will have an extensive influence in promoting the interests of Zion in the world. Saith the author in the concluding chapter of the volume, "The scripture, comprising both Testaments, is to be viewed as a dispensation of God's one, eternal covenant, instituted for the redemption of sinners. In this light, it lays before us one entire, harmonious scheme, which originates in the purpose of God, embraces the whole church, progresses through ages, extends into eternity, and results in a good worthy of unlimited benevolence."

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## Religious Intelligence.

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UNITED STATES.

REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN NEW JERSEY.

*Extract from a Letter from a young Gentleman in Scottstown, New York, to his Friend in Andover, Mass. dated Dec. 11, 1807.*

A WORK of divine grace is now New Jersey. These towns are adjoining on in the town of Newark, adjacent to New York. The work is Elizabethtown, Orangedale, &c. in chiefly among the young; and is considerably

considerably extensive. In Newark three students in the law have hopefully become pious, and are about to prepare for the ministry! This is pleasing to the friends of Zion. The ministers of these places find as much as they can do; and yet they are taught, that they can do nothing. One of them observed, that he seemed to have nothing to do, but to *stand still* and see the *salvation* of God. Other ministers, who visit these places, are animated at the *glorious scene*, and carry home a spirit of *increased zeal* in the work of the Lord. Some careless persons, who resorted thither to visit their friends, were *arrested*, and hopefully made the subjects of divine grace. Thus the Lord is *found of them who sought him not!* Happy, indeed, would it be, if this gracious work should spread and become general through the land. If the interests of religion should revive, and society be rescued from the deluge of wickedness, we should have reason to consider it as a token for good. But will not God *avenge himself on such a nation as this!* The few friends of Christ are under obligation to be engaged with all their hearts in these times of *delusion!*

B.

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FOREIGN.

UNITED BRETHREN'S MISSION  
AT BAVIANSKLOOF.

*Extract of a Letter from Brother C. G. Schneller, in St. Kitts, dated Jan. 26, 1807.*

"You may have heard before now, that it has pleased the Lord to take home to himself, on the 12th of December last, our beloved brother, Eusebius Williams. A large company, both of white people and negroes, attended the funeral. My mind was deeply affected with sorrow for the loss of this valuable young brother, while I delivered the funeral discourse. Both the mission-

aries and all the members of our negro congregation, had gained great love and esteem for this dear brother. His discourses in our church, and his exhortations to our people in town and country, were accompanied with much power and unction; and his heart was full of love and humble zeal, in promoting the spread of our Lord's kingdom. He was willing to do any thing in his power to be useful in the Mission: we had therefore promised ourselves very essential assistance in his services. To gain souls for Christ was his heart's desire and delight: and such are the men we want in the service of God in this Mission. But who can know the ways and purposes of the Lord with his servants?

"After being very active in the labour among the catechumens communicants on the 14th of November, he was seized on the 15th, with a fit of the malignant fever, then prevailing in the island; and on the 18th, the physician pronounced his case to be dangerous. However, the Lord heard our fervent prayers, and restored him to us, so that in a short time he could again do his duty in the church. Yet he continued to complain of weakness and frequent head-aches, but always expressed a hope, that he should soon be well, having been formerly troubled in the same way in England.

"December 11th, he took a short ride for the benefit of the air, and returned home seemingly much refreshed. My wife, who always behaved to him like a mother, persuaded him to take a little broth, after which he called upon brother Procop, and conversed with him as usual very cheerfully, when on a sudden he gave a shriek, his eyes were fixed, and he fell off his seat. The physician being immediately sent for, all possible means were tried for his recovery, but without effect. In the afternoon he was carried to his own dwelling; but though he still moved his right arm and feet, he remained speechless, and his pulse was no more perceptible. At eight o'clock in the morning of the 12th, he ceased to breathe.

"Thus



"Thus this dear and faithful brother was taken from us, and we and our whole congregation cannot but weep over his loss. May the Lord of the harvest soon prepare and send forth other labourers, who, with the same devotedness of heart, love to the negroes, and zeal for the cause, may serve him in this place."

*Extract of a Letter from Brother C. F. Richter, dated St. Johns, Antigua, Dec. 21, 1806.*

"We arrived here on the 12th of October last, and found our brethren and sisters all well.

"We experienced immediately the good effects of the indefatigable pains taken by our dear late brother Eusebius Williams, both during our abode in London, and on the passage, to teach us the English language, by which we were enabled, without loss of time, to begin our labours, and to converse intelligibly with the negroes. This proved a great help to our fellow labourers, as we could directly take our share in visiting the sick, and speaking with the people belonging to this very numerous congregation. We are quite at home here, and have gained a great love for our dear negro brethren and sisters. Brother E. Williams left us on the 22d of October, for St. Kitts.

"We loved this our dear departed brother most cordially, and you will all, no doubt, lament the loss of so hopeful and active a servant of the Lord in this mission. We know that the Lord might have spared him to us, if it had been his gracious will, and pray to be resigned unto him, who does all things well; but we feel the stroke severely, and earnestly entreat him soon to send us a brother equally well prepared by his Spirit, to succeed him, and to serve with the same gladness and unfeigned love and zeal.

"Our late brother was in truth a humble follower of Christ, with whom he had found mercy and peace, and whom he knew and loved as his Redeemer. His peaceable and affectionate disposition, and the

earnest desire, manifest in his whole conversation, to promote the welfare of those who were committed to his care, had gained for him the esteem and love of all who knew him in England, particularly of the scholars in the Brethren's school at Fulneck, in which he had been employed for some years as an assistant. On his arrival in St. Kitts, the negroes immediately gave him their confidence, and loved and regarded him as a man whose whole soul was intent upon serving them and doing them good. His labours, therefore, though of short duration, were attended with the blessing of the Lord, and with good fruit. In teaching brother Richter the English language, he began already here to serve the cause of the mission, by thus qualifying the latter immediately to enter upon the labour."

#### FROM THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

LETTERS, dated Jan. 25, 1807, mention the well-being of our brethren there, and that the number of believing Hottentots at Bavianskloof had been increased in 1806, by fifty persons.

Owing to the weak state of health of the brethren Kohrhammer and Marsveld, they were not able to supply the camp with a missionary; and a Dutch missionary, Mr. Van der Ling, had been called to that station by general Baird.

By letters from London we understand missionary accounts from India have been received there as late as the 13th Feb. 1807. By them it appears that the missionaries at Serampore have progressed far in the printing of the scriptures in six languages, and the translating them into eleven. We also learn they have engaged a Burman Pundit, to assist them in making a twelfth translation.

The above statement will explain how far the laudable object has been obtained which was stated last year, when soliciting subscriptions to assist the efforts of these missionaries in translating the word of God into the Asiatic languages. [*Ev. Int.*

*Biographical*

## Obituary.

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### *Biographical Sketch of Mrs. Abigail Pickard, and her amiable daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Wallis.*

MESSRS. EDITORS,

THE biographical sketches of pious characters, that have adorned your useful Magazine, appear calculated to quicken, animate and encourage others to emulate their examples. Who can hear of conduct so sublime and excellent, without a wish to "go and do likewise?" If the delineation of characters, thus remote in time and place, has influence upon our lives and practice, how great the advantage to be expected from the relation of the pious and exemplary walk of contemporaries, who have recently fallen asleep in Jesus? Of this description may be considered Mrs. Abigail Pickard and her amiable daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Wallis, late of Beverly, Massachusetts.

From a child, Mrs. Pickard was of a kind, affectionate disposition, seeking opportunities to relieve the distressed. Even in the days of her youthful vanity, she never appeared happier, than when employed in carrying food to the hungry, or covering to the naked. But notwithstanding her natural benignity, she was brought to consider her own righteousness, as filthy rags, and to plead the all atoning Sacrifice, as her only foundation to hope for acceptance with God. Living in a time of great declension of religion, she had heard little of the depravity of the heart, and the consequent necessity of regeneration. But hearing of a person, who had been brought from the captivity of Satan to sing redeeming love, her curiosity was excited to hear what the new born soul could say upon so new a subject. The effect was, (such as may God grant every impenitent sinner to experience) conviction of sin, and a heart humbling sense of her wretched state by nature. Notwithstanding the bitter anguish of her soul, she cautiously endeavour-

ed to conceal the malady from human observation, especially from her tender sympathizing companion. Her struggles with her stubborn, rebellious heart were long and poignant. She was at length brought to bow at the feet of Jesus, and acknowledge him her rightful Lord and Sovereign. Soon after this, in the 34th year of her age, she made a profession of religion; and for a while enjoyed light and comfort.

About this time she became the mother of a lovely child. This, being her first son among several children, engrossed too large a share of her affections. For her criminality in thus robbing God, he was pleased to "send leanness into her soul." Though her external walk was regular, yet she was far from possessing that sweet communion with God, those soul ravishing views of the Saviour, which are realized by such, as uniformly give him their supreme affection, and leave all their burdens at the foot of the cross. Notwithstanding her spiritual twilight, she was enabled in a good degree to discharge the duties of a wife, mother, and neighbour. Her acquaintances then pronounced her a friend to humanity, and a lover of the souls of men.

But God, who was preparing her for greater usefulness, saw fit to try her in the furnace of affliction. Her darling son, just verging to manhood, in the bloom of health and loveliness, was suddenly summoned into the eternal world. Dying abroad, where the maternal tongue could administer no counsel, nor the hand relief, no wonder that an indulgent mother was deeply affected. A sense of her unfaithfulness to his immortal soul pierced her through with many sorrows. She was often ready to exclaim, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." In reference to this severe chastisement,



ment, she often remarked, "I was as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke." Her affliction on this account, however, was soon exchanged for painful solicitude for her own soul. Reflections upon her past stupidity in religion and backsliding from God stung her to the heart. The number and magnitude of her sins appeared too great to be forgiven. A view of them filled her with horror. The terrors of the divine law seemed in array against her soul, and the gnawing of the never dying worm appeared already begun. She sometimes retired to bed with the fearful apprehension that she should be lifting up her eyes in hell before morning.

But the Lord, merciful and gracious, "dealt not with her after her sins, nor rewarded her according to her iniquities." "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitied" his afflicted handmaid. He lifted upon her the light of his countenance, and caused her to sing of mercy in the midst of judgment. Her views of the sovereign goodness and equity of God were greatly enlarged. She was constrained to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." With singular propriety might she say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted. Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word."

From this time, we may date the effulgence of that light in her, which "shone more and more unto the perfect day." From this time, she manifested uniform resignation to the divine will. Whatever were her trials, she appeared to rejoice that the Lord reigned, and would eventually overrule all things for his own glory.

Two of her daughters, in view of their ruined state by nature, were brought at different times to the borders of despair. This induced many to ask her, whether she did not tremble for the event. "By no means," she would reply with emphasis, "I feel no anxiety on their account. They are in the hand of God."

Though her faith appeared strong and unwavering, yet her uniform hospitality, kindness to the orphan, liberality to the poor, and attention to the sick, evinced her belief that faith without works is dead. Within her doors the stranger found a safe asylum, a welcome retreat; nor did her want of complacency lead him to realize that he was not encircled in the arms of parental love. The orphan's cause lay near her heart. To such she was a protector and mother.

To the sons and daughters of affliction, who were real objects of charity, her alms flowed liberally. The appeal may be made to such, as God has seen fit to reduce to penury and want. Did she ever say to you, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, without giving those things, which are needful to the body?" And while she supplied your temporal necessities, was she not careful to minister salutary food to your immortal souls?

But the virtue, for which she was most eminently distinguished, and in which she greatly excelled, was her unceasing attention to the sick. To the families of her own children, of whom four were settled near her, she was a physician and a nurse. In all their trials and exigencies, immediate recourse was had to her for advice and counsel; on which they were accustomed to rely with almost implicit confidence. For "she opened her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue was the law of kindness. Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband, also, and he praiseth her." Nor were her brothers and sisters excluded from her assiduous care. In all their sicknesses and distresses she, like their guardian angel, watched around their beds, endeavouring with affectionate zeal to sooth their sorrows and cheer their languid spirits.

But her tender concern for the sick was not confined to the circle of her numerous relations. Her acquaintances in general both rich and poor shared largely in her kindness.

ness. Without waiting for formal invitation, she repaired to the mansion of distress. Nor was she there an idle spectator. She was peculiarly happy in discovering and pursuing such measures, as were conducive to the relief and comfort of the sick. With the greatest readiness and cheerfulness she performed for them the lowest and most arduous offices of humanity.

During the prevalence of contagious disorders, while the sick were suffering for help, and the well fearful of assisting them, this excellent philanthropist was rarely to be found at home. Her business was with the sick and dying. Nor would she cease her prayerful watchings and laborious services, till exhausted nature compelled her to seek repose. No sooner was her vigour restored, than she returned to the beds of the languishing. In cases of uncommon danger, where extraordinary help was necessary, she frequently tarried days and sometimes weeks in character of a tender nurse. Nor could the fostering mother exercise greater gentleness to her infant, than she exercised toward the sick.

Yet for their perishing bodies her concern was comparatively small. These seasons were her precious opportunities to find access to the heart, to whisper gospel truths to the soul, to speak of the total alienation of the natural heart from God, and our infinite need of reconciliation to him through the blood of a Saviour. Many now living can witness the truth of these assertions. But a far greater number will bear her testimony in the great and awful day, when the applauding Judge, as we trust, will salute her ravished ears with "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

She manifested disgust at what is generally denominated fashionable living. Blest with this world's goods, she remembered that they were committed to her for nobler purposes than sumptuous living or vain show. It gave her unspeakably greater joy to be instrumental

of promoting the Redeemer's kingdom, than to have possessed all the honours of a flattering world. The gospel was a delightful, exhaustless treasure to her soul. This she evinced by her remarkably constant and cheerful attendance upon the worship and ordinances of Christ's house, as well as at other places, where "two or three were gathered together in his name." On all such occasions, her solemn attention and animated countenance, convinced the beholder, that she found it *good to be there*. This, however, was not the only way in which she exemplified her attachment to the cause of the dear Immanuel. For evangelical purposes, she was on all occasions a cheerful giver.

Those, who denied the essential doctrines of the gospel, she with humble boldness warned of their danger; and on proper occasions reminded them, that, in order to enter into the kingdom of heaven, they "must be born again." But to such, as differed from her in non-essentials only, she exercised the most tender forbearance and Christian charity; nothing being more painful to her than contentions about modes and forms to the neglect of the weightier matters of the law.

When animosities arose among friends and neighbours, she prudently interfered, not to widen the breach, but, like Moses, "to set them at one again." In such laudable undertakings, she was generally a successful peace maker.

She habitually used great plainness of speech. The rich and the poor were alike subject to her salutary reproofs. But such were her mildness and affability, that she rarely gave offence. While they smarted under reproof, they could not but revere and love the reprover.

Indignities offered to herself or family, she passed over as lightly as possible; observing, that if she did not merit it from creatures, she deserved infinitely more from God, viewing them as his instruments for her correction, though they "meant not so, neither did their hearts think so."

Slander,



Slander, that infectious fashionable vice, was a stranger to her lips; nor was it practised in her presence without a gentle intimation that it is nobler to correct our own faults than to expose the faults of others.

It is well known that her attachment to her minister was strong and uniform. Yet she generally qualified her invitations to him in the following manner: "I wish you to visit us as often as you can, consistently with your numerous duties. We shall always be glad to see you when you cannot be better employed. But if you do not visit us I shall not be grieved, while I have reason to believe that you are engaged in the service of God. I have no doubt but what you wish to visit all your people often. But we all know that you must study in order to bring forth from your treasure things new and old." She would often observe, "We may see and hear our minister many times in the week if we only attend his meetings. Now if we remember and meditate upon what he says, we shall not want his particular visits so often. If we want particular conversation with him, we can visit him."

Her brethren and sisters in the church were precious in her sight. If they strayed from duty, with Christian meekness she would endeavour to lead them back, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

For several of the last years of her life, she appeared to be fast ripening for immortal joys. Her heart seemed truly "fixed, trusting in God."

Nearly two years since, while her eldest daughter was dangerously sick, her son in law agonized with grief in prospect of losing the desire of his eyes, grand children and friends weeping around the bed, this heroic saint, with countenance placid beyond description, stood over her unmoved. "This daughter," said she, "is very dear to me. But I feel no distress in view of parting with her. If I am not de-

ceived, it is my desire that God should be glorified in her, whether in life or death. It is our duty to use all proper means for her recovery, quietly submitting the event to God. We are short sighted creatures, and know not what is best for us: But he knows, and we shall be perfectly safe in trusting in him." This she uttered with an emphasis peculiar to herself, exceedingly impressive. This was her usual manner of administering consolation to the afflicted. Her conversation was in heaven. Nor was the fear of man sufficient to prevent her from conversing in all circles upon the entire depravity of the natural heart, the necessity of repentance toward God, and faith in Jesus Christ.

The last severe trials of her faith previous to her own sickness and dissolution were those of her youngest daughter, Mrs. Wallis, above mentioned, and one of her domestics. Mrs. Wallis was seized with a fever, which she soon apprehended would prove mortal. Her mother, though of the same opinion, maintained a cheerful acquiescence in the will of her heavenly Father. For a considerable time she attended her languishing daughter with unremitting care. But weary nature at length compelled her to submit in part to others what it had been her pleasure to perform alone.

In addition to this affliction, one of her sons was seized at home with a dangerous fever, and also her servant girl, of whom the latter expired in a few days.

She was a girl of colour, who had lived with Mrs. Pickard several years, and who, to the honour of her mistress, loved her, as did all her domestics, with filial affection. The sudden death of this girl, which some would have regarded as a circumstance of small moment, was a severer trial to Mrs. Pickard, than any she had for a long time experienced. She several times observed that she had thought more of her than of her own expiring daughter.

The

The apprehension that she was dying in her sins, and would thus appear before God, was truly distressing. Not that she would arraign his justice, but call in question her own faithfulness to her soul. "I believe," said she, "I have done all for her mortal part that it was my duty to do. But I fear I have come greatly short of duty to her precious, immortal soul." She expressed great concern for her comfort, often inquiring of the worthy physician who attended her family, whether the girl had every thing necessary. She would have esteemed it a privilege to have attended her personally. But we have reason to believe that her prayers and tears were poured forth abundantly in her behalf.

Mrs. Pickard made little or no complaint, till after her daughter expired. Till then, she watched over her, anticipating her wants. Immediately after this melancholy event, which wrung the hearts of many, with countenance composed and mind serene, she used means for her own restoration. But, alas, an incurable disease had taken root and diffused its fatal effects through her frame. She was immediately conveyed home, and died in less than a week.

We have seen her composed and cheerful at the exit of beloved friends and neighbours. We have often witnessed her calm resignation in view of losing beloved children. We lately beheld her joyful confidence in God under the bereavement of an excellent and endeared daughter. We now see her approaching that enemy, from whom nature recoils with horror. Does she tremble in the awful prospect? Does she wish to avoid the king of terrors? Knowing in whom she has believed, she smiles in the face of death. She anticipates his approach, as a welcome introduction to heavenly joys.

The violence of her disorder, which baffled the skill of the most skilful, soon produced great difficulty in speaking; but not sufficient

to prevent her glorifying God. This was a theme familiar to her pious soul. A view to this had long regulated her conduct and added energy to her active powers. She early intimated to her family that she should probably fail, and expressed a desire that they might be prepared for the event. Her eldest daughter inquired which she should choose, life or death, provided they were equally for the glory of God. She replied, "My choice is, that the will of the Lord should be done. I have no will of my own." "Do you feel prepared," said her daughter, "to join that holy company above, whose delight it is to praise and worship God?"—"And give him all the glory," added the mother, with a countenance which indicated a heart already engaged in the heavenly employment.

A sense of duty and regard to the feelings of her friends induced her to follow the prescriptions of her physician, and even to suggest what she supposed might prove beneficial. Still it was evident that she had no expectation of recovering. Through her distressing illness, her patience was almost unexampled. Every thing appeared perfectly right. Her bed was soft and delightful; for Jesus had made it so. Her attendants appeared kind and skilful; and her blessings infinite. *God reigned, and she was satisfied.*

Of her minister, who was preaching to a destitute flock, she spoke in terms the most kind and respectful. Though she mentioned the pleasure his presence would afford, she rejoiced that he was doing greater good elsewhere. On his return he found her speechless. He requested her to raise her hand, if she felt willing to depart. She readily complied, and in a few hours left a world, in which, comparatively, very few have been equally useful.

Shall I but echo the feelings of her numerous friends in saying, that we have lost a mother to ourselves, a mother to our children, and a mother in Israel?

Had



Had Mrs. Pickard's abilities or acquirements raised her above mediocrity, the object of drawing this faint portrait would have been less. The human mind, naturally indolent, shrinks from the task of imitating great actions, which have their foundation in nature, and is ready to exclaim, "There is a lion in the way; God has not given me talents to perform this or that." But the character above described is calculated to silence all such objections, as Mrs. Pickard in point of natural abilities was on a level with mankind in general. Who need despair of successfully copying the original?

Mrs. Wallis, of whom it was intended to have been more particular, than the protracted limits of this relation will now admit, was brought to realize her sinfulness by the instrumentality of the death of her brother, and two others, who died with him, one of whom was her particular friend. When the news first reached her ears, she exclaimed, "O their souls, their precious immortal souls!" She immediately sunk into a stupor, from which she was aroused by the thunders of Sinai. A view of the purity and extent of the divine law, contrasted with the enormity of her own guilt, and the sentence denounced against her on account of it, filled her with unutterable distress; but issued in hopeful conversion.

From this time, she appeared "an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile." Her friendships were sincere and lasting. Her kind and peaceable disposition was acknowledged by all with whom she was conversant. She evidently possessed that "meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Her apparel and deportment were in unison with the humility of her heart. She was a prudent, industrious, "chaste keep-

er at home." As a wife, she was kind and condescending; as a mother, tender beyond description. In short, she was "a crown to her husband," exercising toward him that love and reverence enjoined by the word of God, which add true lustre and dignity to the character of a wife. She had an extraordinary sense of the evil nature of sin, and in view of her own often doubted her union to Christ. But the most prominent feature in her Christian character was godly jealousy.

During the sickness, which terminated her life, Satan appeared to make his last great effort to lead her to despair of mercy, and tremble in view of death. But he, who is stronger than the strong man armed, appeared for her help. She then called her parents to her bed side, and told them that she was willing to die. She tenderly enjoined it upon her husband to bring up their little daughter in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and added, that she had often prayed for the child, if she had ever prayed for herself. "For what purposes," said he, "do you most wish to recover?" She replied, "That I may live more to the glory of God, and assist you in bringing up our dear child for him."

Toward the close of her short, distressful sickness, her senses failed. But, for the most part, she appeared engaged in heavenly contemplations. A few moments before death she whispered, "Shall I not fall asleep in Jesus?" The mutual attachment of this daughter and mother was remarkably strong on earth, and we have reason to hope is perfected in heaven. "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided."\*

\* Mrs. Elizabeth Wallis died October 3d, and Mrs. Abigail Pickard October 9th, 1807.

*Particulars of the death of Lord NELSON.*

THE circumstances attending the death of this great man, cannot be uninteresting to our readers; we therefore select a few of them from Dr. Beattie's authentic narrative:—

"It was about fifteen minutes after one o'clock that he received his mortal wound, by a shot from the mizel-top of the Redoubtable, an enemy's ship, which was then close to the Victory. The ball struck the epaulette on his left shoulder, and penetrated his chest. He fell with his face on the deck, and was soon carried down to the surgeons in the cockpit. From the first, he considered the wound to be mortal; and thought the ball had broken his back: in fact, it did lodge in the back-bone.

"His lordship soon felt an ardent thirst; and frequently called for drink, and to be fanned with paper, making use of these words, "Fan, fan," and "Drink, drink." Lemonade and wine and water were occasionally given him. He was very anxious to see captain Hardy, and to know the state of the battle; and lived to be informed that twelve or fourteen of the enemy's ships had struck.

"He was fully sensible of his danger; and when hopes were held out to him, that he might possibly recover, and enjoy the victory of the day, he constantly declared, "it is all over: I know that nothing can be done for me. My extremities are cold; and I feel a gushing of blood every minute within my breast."

"When capt. Hardy came down to see him, he shook hands with him, and took a most affectionate leave, telling him, that he felt that in a few minutes he should be no more; adding, in a low tone, "Don't throw me overboard, Hardy." The captain answered, "Oh, no, certainly not!" "Then," replied his lordship, "you know what to

do;\* and," continued he, "take care of my dear lady Hamilton, Hardy,—take care of my dear lady Hamilton." After which he said, "Now I am satisfied! Thank God, I have done my duty!"

"Soon after this, he became very low; his breathing was oppressed, and his voice faint. He said to Dr. Scott, "Doctor, I have not been a great sinner; and after a short pause, "Remember, that I leave lady Hamilton and my (adopted) daughter Horatia, as a legacy to my country; and," added he, "never forget Horatia." His thirst now increased, and he often called "Drink, drink, fan, fan," &c. These words were spoken in a very rapid manner, which rendered his articulation difficult; but he every now and then, with evident increase of pain, made a greater effort with his vocal powers, and pronounced distinctly these last words, "Thank God, I have done my duty!" and this sentiment he continued to repeat as long as he was able to give it utterance. He remained speechless about five minutes, and then expired.

"From the time of his being wounded till his death, a period of about two hours and forty five minutes elapsed; and the last distant guns that were fired at the enemy's ships, which were making off, were heard a minute or two before he departed."

Our readers will make their own reflections on the death of this great man, who had been the honoured instrument of defending his country on many important and memorable occasions, and who at last expired in its defence. But it would have afforded peculiar satisfaction to the pious mind to have heard, that in the near approach of dissolution, he had expressed a humble sense of sin, and the hope of a Christian in the merits of the glorious Redeemer, and in the efficacy of that blood which cleanseth from all sin. [Ev. Mag.

\* Alluding to some wishes previously expressed by his lordship to captain Hardy, respecting the place of his interment.